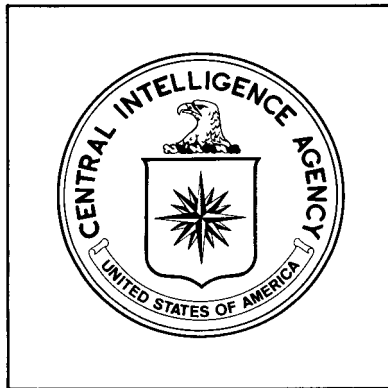


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# STAFF NOTES:

## Soviet Union Eastern Europe

State Dept. review completed

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## SOVIET UNION - EASTERN EUROPE

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the USSR - Eastern Europe Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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Soviet Cultural Policy  
Still Marking Time

The failure of the Central Committee plenum of April 16 to fill the vacant post of party secretary for propaganda and culture indicates that the unsettled atmosphere and ambivalent policy in cultural affairs evident during the past several months is persisting. As a result of his appointment to the government post of minister of culture, candidate Politburo member Petr Demichev was relieved of his long-time responsibilities for culture on the party secretariat at a Central Committee plenum last December.

When the leadership failed at that time to name a successor to the party post there were signs of indecision--and possibly even deadlock--not only on whom to choose, but also on the future course of cultural policy in an era of detente. Now that another plenum has passed without dealing with these problems, it is likely that cultural policy and the selection of Demichev's successor will become a part of the political maneuvering within the party hierarchy in advance of the CPSU congress scheduled for February 1976.

So far, the leadership's stopgap solution has been to parcel out Demichev's former secretariat responsibilities among several incumbent secretaries, and also to act collectively at times when the intervention of the party secretary for culture is normally called for. In terms of policy, a pragmatic carrot-and-stick approach has been evident in some sectors, and immobility and drift in others. The public drumbeat on cultural issues, however, has tended toward a reiteration of generally hard, doctrinaire positions.

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The latest example of collective responsibility in cultural affairs and of public policy orthodoxy was the joint meeting in Moscow of Soviet "creative" unions on April 15. It was attended by seven of the nine party secretaries--only Brezhnev and party secretary for agriculture Kulakov were absent. Although Demichev, who also attended the meeting, was legitimately present in his capacity as minister of culture and candidate Politburo member, he was nevertheless conspicuous as the only leader present who was not also a party secretary. This may strengthen speculation among some Soviet intellectuals that the vacuum in the party's cultural post has enabled Demichev to exercise more of a say in cultural affairs than is customary for a minister of culture.

The joint meeting of the cultural unions, devoted to preparations for the 30th anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe, took the opportunity to restate the commitment of the Soviet cultural establishment to the party and its program by "praising the heroism of the Soviet people during the war and philosophically assessing its result." The main speaker, head of the writers' union board Georgy Markov, never strayed from standard, orthodox positions. None of the party leaders present delivered a speech. Although the forum may have been considered inappropriate for a statement on cultural policy, the leaders' silence could also indicate an unwillingness to take a public stand on unresolved issues.

Markov, who is also a full member of the Central Committee, was among the speakers at the CPSU plenum the following day. None of the speeches at the plenum has been published, but Markov's role evidently was to reassure the political leadership that present controls over culture are adequate to maintain the status quo, at least until the leadership decides on where to go from here.

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Pressures on Polish Journalists Increase

The regime is putting increasing pressure on Polish journalists to criticize inefficiency and misconduct within the local bureaucracies and to increase their ideological fervor.

A well-placed Polish editor recently told US diplomats that "the ideological integration of the Soviet bloc is in full swing" and that Soviet pressure for ideological conformity has been "particularly heavy of late."

The new approach has already claimed its first victims. The US embassy reports that Gustav Gottesman, the deputy editor of *Literatura*, a weekly literary magazine, was recently fired because the journal had published "bourgeois literary and pseudo-scientific" articles and because it had printed articles by young and controversial liberal writers. Gottesman recently completed a six-week visit to the US on an IVP grant. The editor of the satirical journal *Szpilki* has also been fired, and the embassy reports that another editor is "in trouble."

The Gierek leadership has apparently decided to use media criticism to bring incompetent and recalcitrant party and government bureaucrats to heel. The embassy had previously reported that some of its sources claim that the regime is also contemplating a sweeping reorganization of the country's local administrative structure in order to break the power of local authorities who are hindering the implementation of government policies (*Staff Notes*, April 14).

An article in the April edition of *Nowe Drogi*, the party's theoretical monthly, implicitly calls for the press to have an increased ideological content. The article decries the passive character of the press


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and asserts that public criticism is the "driving power of social development" in a socialist society. The author of the article, Zdzislaw Andruskiewicz, is deputy director of the Propaganda, Press and Publications Department of the Central Committee and, in December, was elected vice chairman of the main board of the Polish Journalists' Union.

Andruskiewicz said that despite party efforts, pressures on journalists "all too frequently" prevent the publication of critical articles. He added that journalists do not think criticism is an effective tool for change because enterprises, individuals or offices often react with "nonchalance, contempt or dead silence." In addition, those who are criticized attempt to discredit the moral and professional qualifications of the journalists or "brutally to suppress the criticism." He said that experience over the past four years indicates that the domain of public criticism should be expanded "into those spheres in which it is most needed."

We do not expect an outpouring of journalistic enthusiasm for this task. Instead, the journalists will carefully want to determine the acceptable targets and the scope of the campaign. The party will, of course, keep a close watch to make sure that criticism does not touch the many sacred cows.



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Soviet-Yugoslav Differences Papered Over

During Prime Minister Bijedic's recent visit to the Soviet Union, some of the political differences between Moscow and Belgrade were publicly papered over, but important problems remain.

A Yugoslav diplomat in Moscow told a US colleague that the Soviets had made an effort to soothe Belgrade's pique over recent Soviet articles that belittled the role of Yugoslav partisans in liberating Yugoslavia during World War II (*Staff Notes*, April 11, 14, and 16). He added, however, that Moscow had not gone far enough to satisfy Belgrade. In fact, he described the Bijedic-Kosygin meeting at which the issue was discussed only as "frank," indicating less than a solution.

Other issues also remain unresolved. The Yugoslav indicated that Belgrade is still dissatisfied with the Soviet efforts to get a programmatic document at the European Communist conference, and he said there would have to be a "fundamental reassessment" of the goals of the conference.

Bijedic also apparently raised the question of last fall's Cominformist affair. Deputy Foreign Secretary Mojsov, who accompanied Bijedic, told the US ambassador in Belgrade that Bijedic had "talked freely" about the matter with his Soviet counterparts. Mojsov agreed that the present Soviet leadership had supported efforts to undermine Yugoslavia, but ventured that they "would not soon try this again."

In other areas, Moscow apparently tried to accommodate Yugoslav demands. The language in the communique was somewhat warmer than usual, and

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Moscow reportedly agreed to Yugoslav formulations on peaceful coexistence and the role of the non-aligned movement. The two sides also agreed to continue various bilateral programs dealing with economic and especially industrial cooperation.

Moscow's grudging admission of Yugoslav war efforts will probably cause Belgrade to tone down its outpouring of critical comment. Like last fall's Cominformist affair, however, this most recent controversy can only increase basic Yugoslav suspicions of Soviet motives and goals. [REDACTED]

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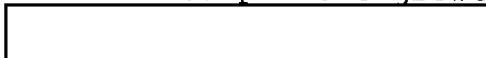
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Yugoslavia: Juggling the Import Mix

Yugoslavia is trying to maintain imports essential to its economic growth while holding down the growing trade deficit. On April 7, Yugoslavia dropped its deposit requirement on foreign credits used for imports of equipment for priority sectors of the economy, such as agriculture, raw materials, and energy development. To obtain foreign loans for non-essential imports, however, the borrower is now required to deposit a prohibitive 75 percent of the loan value with the National Bank. Imports of consumer goods on a credit basis are prohibited.

Earlier this year, Belgrade increased prices and taxes on coffee, cigarettes, diesel oil, and other luxury items in an effort to reduce the demand for imported products. Last year, the regime imposed restrictions on imports of consumer goods. As a result, imports in January were only 23 percent higher than in January 1974, a sharp decline from the 67 percent growth rate for 1974 as a whole.



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